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# CAN THE GERMANS BE RE-EDUCATED?

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ROUNDTABLE

Prepared for  
THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES  
by

## THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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### WAR DEPARTMENT

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The re-education of [the German] . . . people may be difficult indeed. . . . For the victors to rely upon force alone would be futile. Any order, which hopes to survive, must ultimately appeal to the minds of men.

Harry S. Truman, January 29, 1945



# **CAN THE GERMANS BE RE-EDUCATED?**

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**H**ITLER'S REICH was to last a thousand years. It lasted twelve years and three months. Amid its ruins and ashes the Four Powers—the United States, Great Britain, Russia, and France—are now carrying forward certain policies.

First among them is that Germany must be deprived of the means of making war. The most obvious way to make sure that Germany never again starts a world conflict is to see that Germany is stripped of arms.

That, in the long-time view, is a negative kind of policy. It requires enforcement and supervision from the outside. It presumes that the Germans will always want to break loose if they can get their hands on weapons, and therefore it requires either permanent military occupation of Germany or very close supervision coupled with the constant threat of occupation.

No American can examine this policy without immediately sensing that it is alien both to our deep dislike of ruling other people against their will and to our equally deep dislike of keeping an army of occupation in Europe any longer than necessary.

For us, occupation as long as necessary means only until the Germans no longer hunger for domination and war. That, in turn, means a fundamental change in the outlook of the German people. It means their re-education to be good citizens—and to want to be good citizens—in a peaceful and orderly world.

' In the long-time view, all policies that do not contribute to the achievement of this positive purpose will be open to challenge. But before we turn away from the purely negative aim of keeping the Germans from trying aggression again we have to know if a positive aim will succeed. Will we be sorry some day if we build on the hope that a future Germany, chastened and peaceful, can ask for readmittance to the family of nations? Must we forever fear and suppress them, or *can the Germans be re-educated?*

## **HOW DID THE GERMANS GET THAT WAY?**

WHEN YOU TALK of re-educating a whole nation like Germany you need to know something about how the Germans got the way they are. You have to ask yourself how you are going to bring a whole nation to think differently about itself and its place in an orderly world.

Something bigger than rewritten textbooks and reorganized schools is needed to change a nation's prejudices and opinions. Such things are based on the way a people think and what they have been taught—not only about the last twenty-five years but about centuries of their history.

German faith in German might was only in part the result of twelve years of education in tyranny and brutality under Nazi rule. That brief period may account for the fanaticism of the youths who had no other tutors. They were wax in Hitler's hands.

In the adult population it was a little different. The liberals first were suppressed or exiled, the labor unions liquidated, and the churches—both Catholic and Protestant—defamed. Then the great masses readily submitted to minority rule by gangster methods. A despotism that would have been unthinkable in Norway, Holland, England, or the United States was accepted by the masses of Germans and in the end *they defended it to the death.*

Many reasons have been offered to explain Hitler's rise to power. The basic fact to be remembered is that there were in Germany no ancient traditions of self-government, constitutions, parliaments, or free press to oppose him. The answer to why the German nation could put its faith in force and try to make enslavement of its neighbors the solution of its international relations lies in large part in German history, especially the history of the last one hundred years. If we look at it the way Germans have looked at it since Bismarck's day, we will understand better the problem of their re-education.

### ***Before there was a Germany***

Germany lies in the center of Europe. The Romans brought their law and language into France and Spain. They held England firmly for a while. But that part of Europe where Germany now lies was never brought under the civilizing rule of Rome. Trier on the Moselle, Cologne on the Rhine, and Vienna on the Danube were outposts on Rome's northern frontier.

About 800 A.D., Charlemagne, whose capital was Aachen, pushed the frontiers of his empire temporarily as far as Berlin. When Charlemagne's empire fell, after his death in 814, Europe showed dimly the lines of modern national divisions. Every nation in Europe has taken centuries since then to attain unity. Of the great ones, Germany traveled the longest road.

### ***The dream of unity***

For hundreds of years the Germans had the vision but not the reality of national unity. Tribal lands became duchies and counties, which in turn divided and multiplied. Nearly a thousand years ago a Saxon duke called Henry the Fowler and his son Otto I battered the other German duchies into a kind of subordination. Then Otto and his successors let the possibilities of German unity slip away while they fought in Italy



to gain the vain distinction of being crowned by the pope as emperors of a new "Holy Roman Empire."

The last German-Roman emperor with any semblance of national acceptance, Frederick Barbarossa, died on a crusade to the Holy Land in 1190. The legend long persisted that this truly great ruler slept in the caverns of Kyffhäuser Mountain and would awaken some day to restore the lost unity and greatness of Germany. The dream was vain although the longing for unity was real. The crown of the Holy Roman Empire—whose subjects were mostly Germanic—passed to the Austrian Hapsburgs. Succeeding members of that family wore it for 600 years until Napoleon in 1806 rudely knocked it off their heads.

Those six centuries did not bring about a Germany but only *the Germanies*. There were hundreds of regional divisions and loyalties—duchies and counties, and a score or more free cities like Hamburg, Frankfurt, and Lübeck. This was the Germany Napoleon overran (1806-13) and that, two centuries earlier in the Thirty Years' War (1618-48), had been overrun by Spain, France, Denmark, Sweden, and the armies of a so-called German emperor in Vienna. The devastations of that war were equalled or surpassed only by those the Nazis have brought upon Germany today or have wrought with their own hands.

Still the dream of unity persisted. It could not be realized around the greatest state, Austria, whose archduke was the nominal emperor and in his own territories ruled more Slavs and Hungarians than he did Germans. In the long run only some state north of the Danube, nearer the center of the wholly German land, could hope to assume the leadership. Several of the duchies had risen to be considerable powers. They had ancient ruling families who as electors went through the empty formality of choosing the shadow emperor in Vienna.

The state to lead the others might have been Saxony or Bavaria or Hanover. Their rulers had ambitions and all were



autocrats. They had courts that imitated Louis XIV in Versailles. All played for his favor or sometimes English or other foreign support, working always for themselves and not for a greater Germany. For that they would concede nothing.

In time another north German state, Prussia—the one that was least German, the one that by its lands and location was least favored—outdid them all in dynastic craft and conquest. Its ruler became in 1871 the emperor of a united Germany.

### ***The rising star of the Hohenzollerns***

How did it come about that a Hohenzollern from Berlin, the capital of Brandenburg-Prussia, was raised on the bayonets of all Germany to this high honor? How did a Prussian king become the modern Frederick Barbarossa and in 1870 fulfill the dream of a politically united, militarily unconquerable Germany?

The whole story covers more than a thousand years but the gist of it can be told briefly without distortion. Charlemagne in his day, around 800, set up guarding military posts, “marches” or “marks” they were called, ruled by a *Markgraf* (count) and a bishop. Sword and cross were the supports of his rule on the distant frontiers.

One of these military colonies, the mark of Brandenburg, had its center where Berlin stands in a sandy plain on the sluggish Spree River. In the next centuries even the shadow emperors never forgot that Brandenburg was an important military outpost and they tried to keep it in the hands of capable rulers. Often, however, they could do little to support even a strong *Markgraf*, and when the most vigorous line died out in 1219, two centuries of feudal anarchy followed.

Then in 1415 the first Hohenzollern was given the doubtful reward of being made elector (ruler) of Brandenburg. The Hohenzollerns came to a border province that had scant natural resources and no natural boundaries. Only fighting armies could mark and hold the frontiers of such a state. The

chances of survival here, even more than elsewhere in medieval times, depended on force and cunning. Sometimes it was a matter of retreating in order to strike on some more favorable day when a treaty or family pact could be broken to advantage.

### ***Prussian aggrandizement***

Hohenzollern followed Hohenzollern. Some were weak and vain, but the one thing all dreaded was to be branded as a decreaser of the state. If they could not add territory one way, they tried another. As Brandenburg expanded, their neighbors became more jealous, more numerous, and more powerful. In 1618, on the eve of the Thirty Years' War, the death of a distant relative gave the Hohenzollerns in Berlin possession of the Duchy of Prussia up on the Baltic far away and cut off by intervening Polish territory. And then they got some little territories on the Rhine and some bishoprics scattered between—nothing solid and connected.

All could be lost but more could be won only by successful wars and alliances. With Poland, Saxony, Sweden, Denmark, Hanover, and Holland as neighbors, with Austria and France watchful, it was a dangerous game. But now the Hohenzollerns produced within a century and a half (1640-1786) three rulers who knew how to use an army, a treasury carefully filled, and a tortuous diplomacy.

The greatest of the three was the last, Frederick II, called the Great. While we were fighting the French and Indian War in North America, he, with some aid from Pitt in England, beat the Russians, French, and Austrians who once had him cornered and ready to take poison. The Russians occupied Berlin briefly in 1760.

In the end Frederick the Great went on to share in the partition of Poland and to leave an army that was unbeaten and a people that accepted the dominance of the military in the nation's life. His officers and many of his diplomats he drew from the Junker class of landed nobles. As a class they



**Frederick the Great of Prussia, in whose victories all Germans gloried**

became more royalist than the king himself. As individuals they died for him on the battlefield.

Under Frederick the Great, Prussia outstripped all the other German states, and the glories of Prussian victories were appropriated by all Germans. Twenty years after Frederick's death Napoleon crushed Prussia. But he crushed Austria and all the other German states, too, so that when Prussia rose up behind Napoleon's armies, during his fatal Russian campaign, it led Germany.

### ***Liberal hopes vs. Bismarckian realism***

The Germans again dreamed of a united Germany. Many hoped for a constitution and liberties for the citizens as a reward for their part in the Wars of Liberation against



Napoleon. They reckoned without the princes and forgot that it was yet to be decided whether Prussia or Austria should lead a united Germany. They got only a hollow confederation while Prussia acquired half of Saxony and the Rhine Provinces. Prussian military power had earned it and given Prussia the watch on the Rhine against another Napoleon.

When in 1848 revolution spread from Paris across the Rhine, the liberals in Germany had high hopes that an elected convention meeting in Frankfurt would unite Germany and give it a constitution and a parliament and the liberties they saw in England. It was a vain hope. The frightened princes recovered their nerve and the Prussian army crushed the last uprising.

One Prussian Junker read the lessons of 1848 differently from the liberals. Otto von Bismarck wanted to see Austria driven out and Prussia become the leader of any future united Germany. The German princes and kings would be left with diminished power, in his scheme, but the people would be rallied by some concessions. Not by written constitutions but by blood and iron was Germany to be united and the imperial crown placed on a Hohenzollern head.

The army was reformed. Austria was isolated and in 1866 beaten in six weeks. Four years later, war with a half-prepared France ended in a peace dictated by Germany at Versailles. Militarism, the army, the principle of brute force in international relations had led from triumph to triumph. Frederick the Great and Bismarck had done what liberalism and parliaments could not do. Germany was a great power.

Unity had been achieved but at the price of making the state and the army dominant over the individual citizen. A united Germany had been created by blood and iron, not ballots. Only by the same means, said its leaders, could Germany's future be assured and its power increased.

Thus the rulers and the powerful military clique read the

history of Prussia and Germany. Thus it was taught. The heroes of the nation were the makers of war and the victors in it. American soldiers have seen monuments to them and to Bismarck and Emperor William I all over Germany. They have seen few if any memorials to liberal, democratic, and pacific leaders.

Thus were generations educated before Hitler, an Austrian, ever raised his voice.

Thus was set the basic problem in re-educating Germany: How do you reshape a nation's faith in armed force and the supreme state?

### ***World War I and its aftermath***

Defeat in the first World War did not permanently turn the German nation's thinking to ways of peace. Germany in 1918 had not experienced invasion and occupation and, in spite of heavy casualties and the rigors of the blockade, was relatively undamaged. The myth was quickly spread that the German army was never really defeated, that it had been betrayed at home, that the nation had failed the army, not the army the nation. Mistakes had been made, it was said, that Germany could avoid next time. "Der Tag" would come again.

Hitler played upon beaten Germany's sense of frustration and humiliation after fifty years of triumph. Economic distress and unemployment, not peculiar to Germany, played into his hands. Over and over he reiterated the myth of the undefeated army and how it had been "stabbed in the back." The lesson to be learned from 1914-18 was not how to keep the peace but how to break it. The Jews and communists and then all liberals were made the objects of scorn and reprisal. To the Nazis and many other Germans the republican regime of 1919-33 was a shameful interlude.

The Third Reich swept away the Republic founded at Weimar and in the end challenged the world and all its civilized ways. Now the Third Reich is in ruins. The Germans



**Jews and communists became the first scapegoats for Nazi persecution.**

who led it, the Germans who acquiesced in it during the brief day of its triumphs, and the generation of Germans whose minds are poisoned by the barbaric doctrines of Nazism are the Germans who must be re-educated, if the lessons are to last.

### ***Decisive defeat this time***

The first measure, the one that had to be achieved before all others and before any others had a chance, was the thorough and crushing defeat of Germany in every center, every hamlet, the length of every highway from north to south and east to west. Never again can any German, present or future, have an excuse for thinking Germany was not beaten or is unbeatable. Never again must he think he is of a superior race or that dictators are safe leaders and democracies decadent. Something of what Germany has meted out to others, short



of mass murders and starvation camps, must sternly and justly be meted out to her.

Now that utter defeat has punctured the idea that Germany could gain its ends by force—an idea the Germans learned from Prussia's military successes and which defeat in World War I didn't knock out of them—there may be place or hope for the things this pamphlet discusses. Our soldiers, along with those of Great Britain, Russia, and France, are among the first schoolmasters in the process of re-educating Germany. Their task will continue during the period of occupation. They will be the most numerous and ever-present representatives of nations and ideas that the Nazis have vilified as ruthless aggressors plotting to destroy the Germans as a people. That idea will be scotched by a stern but just rule. That some conquerors obey laws and do not reduce nations to slavery is another lesson the soldier is teaching the people of Germany.

### ***And then what?***

What next? Can the Germans be made to see that the real period of their shame is the one just closed? Can a nation that accepted might as right since Bismarck's day, that made the state supreme over the individual, learn another and different lesson from history? Can self-government and the responsibility of rulers to the ruled be taught a people who now say of the fallen Nazis and their crimes: "We had nothing to do with it"?

If in twelve years gangsters can browbeat and propagandize a people into acceptance of Nazi doctrines, can the same people be educated to accept contrary ideals of national and international action? How long will it take? Who will do it? How can it be done? Will it stick? Or will the Germans some day believe that they were a heroic nation of warriors that only a whole world could conquer and that it was the conquerors who caused the ruin of their cities and shrines? Will Hitler be another Barbarossa?

It is still too early to say what the answers to these questions will be. It is safe to assume, however, that they will not be favorable to Allied interests unless we make, without illusion, a determined effort to understand the German people.

For the past 1,500 years, central Europe, from the Baltic to the Balkans, has been a cockpit in which a relentless, selfish, and brutal struggle for power has taken place. This struggle has pitted Christian against Turk and pagan, Catholic against Protestant, German against Slav, and German against his fellow Germans. For centuries, no permanent equilibrium was effectively established between these warring elements. Hence, no lasting sense of social or political security could develop comparable to that which grew up in England or America, where relative geographical isolation helped to promote political unity and encouraged security behind natural barriers of land and sea.

Past centuries of bitter struggle have left their imprint not only upon German temperament and character but also upon the German way of life. The type of democracy developed by the English-speaking peoples never had a chance to take root in Germany. The individualism which it bred requires centuries of relative political security to attain full growth. Such security is precisely what the German people have never had. Under these circumstances it would be a mistake to suppose that our own peculiar brand of democracy will be understood or appreciated by the average German. The most we can hope to accomplish will be to help the Germans to work out their own political salvation for themselves within the framework of the sort of peaceful world which the victorious United Nations wish to see established.

We would also be well advised to face the fact that the future Germany will have to be founded upon such past German traditions as may be shared by the German people with the rest of the Western world, rather than upon any alien traditions imposed upon them from outside by a vic-

torious enemy. Germans, in other words, must learn to encourage the development of those elements in their own past civilization most compatible with our way of life and with our aspirations for the future. That such elements have long existed within Germany cannot be doubted, but they have been suppressed in recent decades so ruthlessly that today they will be all but forgotten. Their rediscovery will assuredly prove difficult; at worst, it may prove impossible.

Having looked on the dark side, and it is very dark, we now have some measure of the difficulty of solving the problem of re-educating the Germans. Happily the dark side is not the only side. Men of good will, who know that the future peace of the world may depend on their making the most of what is good and of what is possible, may not lose hope. In this discussion we shall have to keep topside the best that is in us and the best we can find in a Germany that it is the despair of the world to understand.

## ***ARE THERE FACTORS FAVORABLE TO RE-EDUCATION?***

ON THE OTHER SIDE of the picture Germany and the Germans show up as one of the most productive groups in Western culture and civilization. Their creative ability was not always confined to Krupp and the general staff, to armies and war and the munitions of war. Nor will it die when those are obliterated.

In music the names of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms have few peers and no superiors. Great literary figures such as Schiller and Goethe belong, like Shakespeare, to the world. The Germans have had great artists, even if not the greatest. Our soldiers have seen the cathedrals German architecture built. The world's thinking has been influenced by the great German philosophers and scientists. German universities in the nineteenth century were the mecca of scholars from all lands.



### ***Leadership in education***

It should not be forgotten that, after the Lutheran revolt, the Germans founded publicly supported schools earlier than any other people. The schoolmaster has always been a power in the land. He, for there are few if any schoolmasters in Germany, was revered and respected in his community. Indeed the German state rested, in the past, on a tripod: the soldier, the bureaucrat, and the schoolmaster. Even in the darkest days of the 'Thirty Years' War the schools were kept going in some districts. The University of Berlin was founded when Napoleon had Germany in his grip.

At the end of the eighteenth and during the nineteenth century some German districts, particularly Prussia and Saxony, developed public-school and teacher-training systems which were copied in some and admired in most other civilized countries. In the year 1843 Horace Mann, the "father of the American public school," praised German education as being superior to that of all the other countries he had visited in Europe.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Germans accepted widely the advanced ideas of the great Swiss educator Pestalozzi. The German educators Froebel, the "father of the kindergarten," and Herbart influenced educational theory and practice all over the world. During the nineteenth century Germany produced more educational literature than any other country.

### ***Religion and materialism***

The German people have also shown a great interest in religion. Germany, through the work of Luther, was the cradle of the Protestant Reformation. Whatever one's religious convictions may be, it cannot be denied that the Reformation caused a great revival in religious life and thought, even among the Catholic groups which had to defend their tradition against the religious revolution. The

Reformation divided Germany, which already suffered from political disunity, into two religious camps and, in connection with dynastic conflicts, brought about the Thirty Years' War, the historical consequences of which have been mentioned on an earlier page.

On the other hand, the rivalry of the two great religious denominations in Germany was not always hostile in nature. There was much cross-fertilization between the two groups, and some of the modern German religious poets and thinkers have profited equally from both the Catholic and the Protestant traditions.

In spite of all this intellectual activity, however, careful observers inside and outside Germany noticed, from about 1870 on, changes in the psychology of the German people. They became increasingly materialistic. In a way this was true of all great nations. But in Germany the rapid development of industry, together with swift victories in a series of European wars, strengthened the alliance between the new capitalistic and the old feudal classes. Their influence overpowered opposing groups and led Germany to become a strong contender in the struggle for world markets and imperialistic expansion.

Once their militarist mania has been cured, one of the main goals in the re-education of the Germans will be to restore in them the consciousness of their cultural tradition. This, of course, cannot be done simply by telling them that they ought to play music and read Schiller and Goethe.

## ***HOW DID HITLER BRING OUT THE WORST IN GERMANY?***

MANY VOLUMES of sense and some of nonsense have been written and will be written to explain how men like Hitler and Himmler and Goebbels rose to power and how the German people yielded to tyranny, cruelty, murder, and concentration

camps imposed even on themselves. The fact that we try to explain these evils means that we believe the German people capable of better things and that we have hopes they will eventually recognize the sorry years of Hitler's rule as a nightmare for them as it was for the rest of the world.

### ***The Nazi conquest of Germany***

When one reviews the reasons most generally offered to explain how the Nazis conquered Germany, they make some sense but not complete sense. As you list them—for instance unemployment, business depression, and a terrible inflation that wiped out the old middle class—you are forced to say, "But these things occurred in other countries and they did not, except in Italy, bring gangsters to the top."

The remaining reasons explain how the Nazis kept on top as much as how they got there. An unscrupulous and unparalleled propaganda system closed all avenues of information except those controlled by the Nazis. Free press, free discussion of social and political problems, even uninhibited discussion of art and literature were ended. Reading foreign newspapers and listening to foreign radio broadcasts were forbidden. "Purges" wiped out overt opposition or cowed it into silence. The lowest of human instincts were given free rein among the members of such organized groups as the Gestapo and the S.S. -

In order to inject their views into the young and turn child against parent, the Nazis seized the schools and made membership in the Hitler Youth obligatory. All independent teachers' organizations were abolished in favor of a National Socialist League of Teachers. Teachers had to take an oath of personal loyalty to Hitler. The schools were reorganized on authoritarian lines, the textbooks rewritten, and the courses overhauled to emphasize "Germanism," the mystic ties of "Blood and Soil," the virtues of war and conquest, the need of Germany for more space, the Nazi doctrines of race superi-

ority and race purity, and so on. In short, the entire German educational system, from the kindergartens through the universities—and outside the classroom too—was organized to mold every German into a confirmed Nazi.

The Nazis clothed their outrages against the German people in disguises that fooled not only outsiders but Germans as well. Through subsidies and a program of rearmament they provided work for the unemployed. They salved the national sense of frustration by the steps, one at a time but ever bolder, by which they undermined the territorial and military limitations laid on Germany at the end of the last war.

When Hitler reoccupied the Rhineland in 1936, Europe hesitated—then did nothing. The Führer's fear of a vigorous military reaction had been great and his relief was immense when the democracies did not move. He was on his way. By concession after concession, European statesmen of an older school tried to appease him and buy "peace in our time." They found that his demands grew with each concession. Bread and glory made it easy even for reluctant Germans to swallow lies and join in heiling Hitler.

### ***Nazi ideology***

Fortunately for any hope of German re-education, the Nazis had no profound philosophy. They were opportunists and the patchwork of scrambled ideas they called their ideology had no single source.

After Nazi ideology was roughed out in *Mein Kampf* by Hitler and his collaborators, they were happy to have German intellectuals discover that its basic concepts were derived from such esteemed German thinkers as Herder, Fichte, Hegel, and Nietzsche. In the exaggeration of the *Führerprinzip*, the idea of a dominant leader, it linked up with the history that glorified Frederick the Great and Bismarck. In a nation where uniforms and heel clicking are important, where questions of rank and status permeate civilian life, it was logically



inevitable that the pyramid be capped with an "all highest" whether his name was William Hohenzollern or Adolf Hitler.

Two other ideas taken from the past, especially the last century, were (1) the dominance of the state over any individual's interests or rights and (2) the glorification of military might. By a propaganda that stopped at nothing, Hitler used temporary distress and past history to create a kind of religion of racial superiority and to make himself its high priest.

### ***How shall we judge the Germans?***

The German nation, like any other, has its good and its bad side, its good and its bad citizens. Hitler brought to the top much that was bad in the Germans and everything that was aggressive and socially immoral in their past. He suppressed ruthlessly all that was good either in Germans or Germany's past. He involved all in common guilt and common ruin.

The road back will be long and difficult. If we regard it as hopeless and adopt toward all Germans the attitude the Nazis adopted toward conquered peoples, then we have only beaten Hitler in a material sense. In the realm of the spirit he will have conquered us. The history of mankind teaches that under certain circumstances men's instincts of cruelty and lust for power can be easily evoked, especially when they are rewarded. But there are also many signs that some Germans consider Hitlerism an alien form of government and the gravedigger of their own better traditions.

In judging the German people, or any other people, we cannot base an opinion on just one brief space of time. In the sum total of their history the Germans show the defects and the gifts which can be found in other nations too. Despite the horrors of the Nazi system and the deep impression which it has certainly made on the German mind, we have no proof that the creativeness once displayed by the Germans in education and science, for instance, has disappeared from the whole German nation. Rather we must suppose that the talents and



Can German scientific talent be converted to peacetime productivity?

inventiveness which the Nazis used for destruction still exist and can be turned back into satisfying and productive channels. The "militant slave mentality," to use the phrase of a distinguished German exile, must be turned in time into a political morality that does not make force the only arbiter between men and nations.

## ***WILL POSTWAR GERMANY WANT TO BE RE-EDUCATED?***

THE MILITARY DEFEAT of an army does not necessarily mean that the cause for which it fought will be abandoned by every follower. No one supposes that just because Hitlerism has been utterly crushed in battle, every last Nazi will suddenly have a change of heart. On the contrary, there are Germans, especially among the young men imbued with fanatic Nazism, to whom the teachings of Hitler and Goebbels and Rosenberg are a sort of religion. To them the dead leaders will live as martyrs; defeat will only strengthen their resolve to achieve the aims of Nazism another day. Like the defeated German generals of the first World War, they will wait and work for the day of revenge and victory.

One cannot but believe that for the majority of Germans Nazism lost its spell when it collapsed in defeat and brought Germany to ruin. Unlike the great religions, in which humility and suffering are recognized as sources of strength and purity, the whole fascist system is based on the myth of superiority and feeds on success by any means. When all the sacrifices of the people bring nothing but defeat and worse despair than before, it may be expected that the Nazi ideology, its glitter gone, will lose its popular following.

### ***Unwelcome conquerors***

But even if the Germans are pretty thoroughly disillusioned about the Hitler leadership, and even if they accept their defeat

as final, they will not necessarily develop a cooperative attitude toward the victors. There are several basic reasons for this:

First, defeat is always humiliating and occupation by enemy armies is still more so. Bitterness and hatred are to be expected of the Germans rather than good feeling toward the occupying authorities. No matter how much they may revile the former government, they will still feel loyalty toward their country and aversion toward those who hold it in subjection. The occupying authorities will inevitably have to adopt measures that will rub the people the wrong way and make them less receptive to efforts at re-education.

Second, decent people of the kind who might exert influence among their fellow countrymen will hesitate to cooperate with the victors for fear of being branded "quislings."

Third, foreign interference in the education of the younger generation is probably more resented than foreign interference in merely political or economic affairs. In and through education a nation expresses and transmits traditions and experiences of its own that can never be fully sensed or shared by other nations. Inasmuch as some supervision of the schools is a necessary part of re-educating the German people, we can expect to incur antagonism because of it.

Finally, the Germans will fear that the Four Powers are not interested in the "re-education" of Germany from benevolent motives of peace and mutual well-being, but as a subtle form of subjection and of continued control.

Never, perhaps, has an attempt at large-scale education been made under more difficult conditions.

### ***The heavy task***

For these reasons some people in the United States will strongly argue that the matter of re-educating the Germans should be left to the Germans themselves. The idea would be to subject Germany to severe political control for a number



of years and of course to deal swift and sure punishment to Nazi leaders and war criminals, but to keep hands off the whole job of changing the people's point of view.

The Four Powers, they will argue, should use chiefly military, political, and economic controls rather than educational programs. If those methods succeed, then education will follow. If those methods do not succeed, then tinkering with education will only make everything worse. It will expose the agents of the allies to endless mistakes and failures and will destroy their prestige.

These are strong and serious arguments. They cannot be dismissed with a shrug. If the Four Powers are to take up the task of re-educating Germany, those who make the attempt will carry a great responsibility. They will have to do much careful and fundamental thinking about the purposes and methods of re-education. They will have to investigate who the Germans are and how they got that way much more thoroughly than we have here. And they will have to consider what are the principal conditions to successful re-education.

### ***The goal of re-education***

Neither education nor re-education can ever get places unless the educators are aiming at something and know what they are aiming at. At the same time, it is impossible to work out an educational aim without taking account of the current situation and the probable future of the person or group to be educated.

Here comes one of the big difficulties. During the last four decades the older generations in Germany have experienced three different kinds of political systems and been disappointed in each: the monarchy of William II, the Weimar Republic, and the fascism of Adolf Hitler. What are they going to choose now—or what is going to be chosen for them?

Many Americans will almost automatically say that democracy must of course be the goal of German re-education. But

what is democracy? Is it a particular form of government with popular representation and a president at the top? If so, then some countries with the most democratic spirit, such as the Scandinavian countries, could not be called democracies because they are constitutional monarchies.

Not the form, but the substance and the spirit are the distinguishing marks of democracy. In modern use, "democracy" means a way of life, the recognition of certain "unalienable rights" such as are laid down in our Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights, for instance. It doesn't mean our particular structure of government since nations with different structures are also democratic.

Great and desirable as these rights are, they cannot be imposed on a nation from the outside. Nor can a nation produce them out of itself without being prepared for them—and Germany under Hitler's dictatorship certainly has not had the right preparation. Yet, the understanding of democracy as a "way of life" would presumably be one of the chief aims of German re-education, at least for the beginning. In other words, the educators ought not to bother so much whether the Germans are going to have one particular form of government or another. They should not play the role of the law-giver, but that of a guide who knows his goal. From the start German school supervisors, willing to cooperate, asked to be told what they should do.

### ***The limits of education***

Education, in the sense of formal schooling, can do much toward re-educating the Germans, but it has definite limitations. An education which leaves no freedom for self-decision leads to opposition and thus defeats its own end. The kind of political organization which the Germans will eventually choose or be driven into by force of circumstances will not be decided by education, least of all by an education imposed from outside. It will be decided by the economic and political

conditions of the future. To think that education can do everything betrays a dangerous ignorance of reality.

Furthermore if each of the occupying countries, by controlling the schools in its zone, should insist on a political education according to its particular political principles, then confusion both during and after the occupation period will be the result. This danger can be averted only if the occupying nations restrict their educational influence to the restoration of sound human relations among the Germans and between the Germans and other nations. This, of course, means first of all the elimination of Nazi influence on education in every part of Germany.

## ***WHO SHOULD TEACH IN GERMANY'S SCHOOLS—AND WHAT?***

NOTHING IMPRESSES a pupil more than the personality of the teacher. In the complex problem of reincorporating the Germans into international life this circumstance may be decisive. Every American soldier represents his nation. The way in which he behaves to his own comrades and the degree to which he impresses the Germans as a disciplined serviceman and as a human being will contribute more to the re-education of the former enemy than the most skillful speeches, movies, and radio addresses.

### ***The former teachers***

In reopening the German schools, a negative measure is necessary first. This is the removal from the schools of all German educators who openly and consistently helped to bring about the victory of the Nazi party, who persecuted the children of Jews or of parents with liberal convictions, or who used their influence in the party for intimidating their colleagues. The very definition of re-education demands that men and women who stood voluntarily behind the cruelties of the Nazi regime cannot be entrusted with the upbringing of youth.

The removal of convinced and dangerous Nazis from the schools raises the problem of whether enough teachers will be left for regular instruction. In all likelihood several hundreds of thousands of teachers and prospective teachers died on the battlefields.

One of the many disastrous consequences which Hitler brought upon the Germany he pretended to raise to a new period of grandeur is that Germany will have a totally unbalanced population, with old people and children in the great majority. In addition, with approximately 5 million dead and permanently disabled in their armed forces, the numerical balance between the two sexes will be completely upset.

The consequences are obvious. The relatively small group of men and women of earning age will have to take care of too many young and old people in a country full of ruins and insecurity. Several million women will be deprived of normal fulfillment of their maternal instincts. All this will affect the schools, and no administrative skill can avoid it.

It is from this surplus of women that the Four Powers could probably draw a large part of the teaching staff needed for German re-education. The German schools have been primarily in the hands of men. Men predominated in boys' schools clear down to the first grade. Only kindergarten teachers were women. Even in girls' schools there were many male teachers.

The Germans believe that the American educational system suffers from an excess of women teachers. They have asserted that the influence of these women has made our children, especially our boys, too soft and pacifistic. The Nazis derided the influence of the Christian church as making us too forgiving and too sentimental. If the Germans thought that women teachers had a softening effect upon our youth, the smashing victories of our armies must have knocked that idea out of their heads by now.

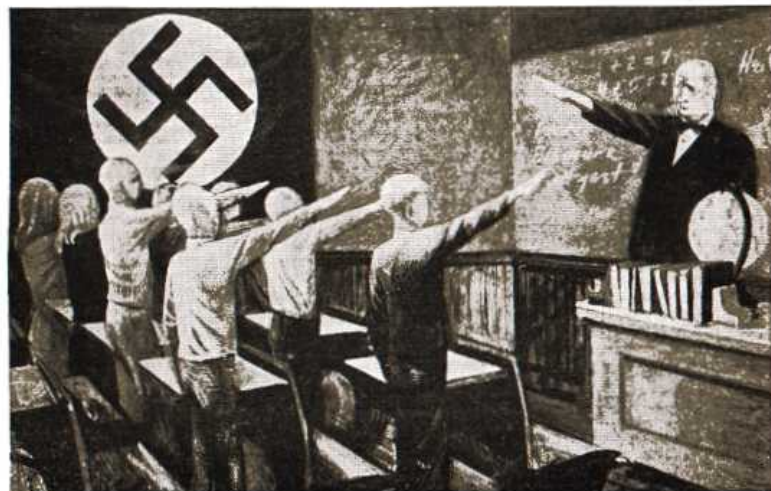


### ***The dilemma***

The situation will force a certain caution upon the responsible authorities of the Four Powers. They face a dilemma through the removal from the schools of all teachers tainted with Nazism. Is it possible to keep the schools going when all teachers who belonged to the Nazi party are fired? Which evil is the greater: keeping on a considerable number of teachers who were members of the party or allowing an already mentally twisted younger generation to run around without guidance, instruction, or purpose? During the last three years of the war the shortage of teachers prevented any regular teaching in the rural districts of Germany. The bombing of the cities and the warfare in Germany itself had the same effect on the urban population. Already, therefore, the children of Germany are short on formal schooling.

But perhaps there is not so much reason to worry about future Nazi influence in the schools. How many teachers, after all, will want to repeat to the children of the devastated

**Under Hitler, German schools stressed obedience and Führer worship.**



nation all the pompous phrases of Hitler, Goering, Goebbels, and Rosenberg about the glorious "Third Reich of Hitler" or the "Thousand Years' Empire" of German fascism, about the superiority of the German race or the invincibility of the German army? The once famous slogan "We are grateful to our Führer" would have a hollow ring in the bomb-scarred classrooms.

### ***Can foreign teachers be used?***

In order to get out of this dilemma some people have advocated the employment of American, British, French, Russian, and other non-German teachers in German schools.

Before and even during the Hitler regime, many foreign instructors were employed to teach their own languages in German schools. There is no reason why foreign language instructors should not continue to instruct Germans in other languages now that the war is ended, provided enough non-German teachers can be found who want to go to Germany. They might be highly useful not only for teaching French, English, or Russian, but also as pioneers of intercultural contact. But that is *about all* they can be expected to do, and even that only for a very small number of children.

If foreign teachers were to be used for influencing and controlling German education, thousands of them would have to be imported. It is more than doubtful that they would be available. In order to teach children of a foreign nation a teacher must have mastery of their language such as is generally acquired only with several years of living in the particular country. The younger the children and the less they and their parents are familiar with foreign culture, the more a teacher with a foreign accent and inevitable mistakes in his speech exposes himself to ridicule. A teacher who appears ridiculous in his pupils' eyes is useless.

In addition, a foreign teacher might be considered a spy or at least an unwelcome alien even by those of his German col-

leagues who would otherwise be glad to establish international contacts. Such an isolation is, in the long run, unbearable, especially for the type of person who loves to teach.

For these and other reasons, the mass importation of teachers from four different nations already short of teachers at home can hardly be considered seriously.

### ***Or refugees?***

There are many competent teachers among the great number of German political and racial exiles who took refuge from Nazism in foreign countries. With respect to them the answer is not so easy. They know the language and the cultural tradition of the people. Their return might be regarded as a natural result of the changed situation.

However, the record shows that returning emigrants often have lost touch with their home country. They have not shared the experiences of the most critical years of its existence. Moreover, Germans in the service of foreign occupation authorities may be looked upon with even more suspicion than real foreigners. And lastly, many of the exiled teachers do not want to go back to Germany.

### ***What kind of textbooks?***

Textbooks will not play the same decisive role they do in the typical American school. Of course the Nazi textbooks with their insidious propaganda and their application of the doctrines of Hitlerism to every mathematical, scientific, or social problem will have to be replaced. They may become a cause of shame and a target of ridicule anyhow.

But what is to be done before the new textbooks are available? And who is going to write them?

The Nazis burned pre-Hitler textbooks whenever they laid hands on them. Fortunately there were copies in this country which could be and have been shipped to Germany, revised, and reprinted for the lower grades. Where such pre-Nazi texts are not available teachers will have to use more general



sources of information and organize their classes without the help of any textbook. In earlier times the good German teacher was supposed to be independent of such devices anyhow. That is a major reason why the teacher in Germany was so important and influential.

Why not use German textbooks prepared in foreign countries, especially in the United States?

This problem has been long in the minds of educators, particularly of refugees from Germany. It is difficult to foresee whether the textbooks prepared by some of them will be accepted by the Germans. The books would be imposed by external authority, and therefore probably read with a feeling of resentment. Every German teacher could produce such a feeling in his children simply by an occasional remark that the new textbook was "prefabricated" for them while they were being bombed.

Great care will have to be taken that such hostile attitudes do not arise. One suggestion has been made to prepare the textbooks outside of Germany and send the manuscripts to cooperative German teachers for discussion. This might give them the sense that they have participated in the process and that the books they use have not been foisted upon them.

Textbooks in history and literature raise another and rather difficult problem. Every nation, in every period of its existence, writes history anew, so to speak. That means that its own particular experiences, the hopes it cherishes for the future, the ideals it believes in, and the economic and social organization it has or wishes to have, color its historical viewpoints.

The Germans, as we have seen, have no clear historical outlook. The past is gone, together with happiness and property. What will be the future? Democratic? Communitistic? A new kind of internationally tolerated fascism? Each case would demand a different history. Certain features of the past would be condemned in each, others favored. Certain



possibilities for the future would be recommended, others rejected.

### ***Modern means of education***

There are now means of information more dynamic and flexible than textbooks and able to reach wider audiences. Inexpensive pamphlets, the movies, the radio, and television could be used in re-education. For instance, a series of pamphlets could tell the Germans what people in other countries have been thinking and doing during the twelve years of Nazi-enforced isolation, tell them about different forms of government from Hitlerism, bring them up to date on world events and progress, and thus reincorporate them into international society. Well-documented pamphlets could also be used for informing the Germans of all the lies, the insanities, and the cruelties the Nazis have committed against other nations and their own people. Such booklets are now in preparation, especially on the history of the last dozen years that has been concealed from the Germans.

People often know very little about the events which concern their own nation, even when living in a free society. This is all the more true when books, newspapers, radio, even private conversations have been controlled for a decade by censors and Gestapo officers. Even persons with keen minds gradually fall prey to an unceasing form of control and propaganda. Only a very few men with extremely strong characters can swim against the stream for a long time.

Goebbels and his propaganda ministry used the movies and the radio with great skill. This has a certain disadvantage for the future. Disillusioned, the Germans may not believe anything. The authorities of the Four Powers who are responsible for the educational use of the movies and the radio in Germany will need a fine sense for what can be offered at the right moment. Cheap attempts to become popular may backfire. After the vulgarity in the propaganda, the

speech, and even the gestures of such men as Hitler and Goebbels, nothing the Four Powers do in the field of re-education will impress the Germans so much as an attitude of dignity and restraint.

## ***IS FORMAL EDUCATION THE ONLY WAY TO RE-EDUCATION?***

THE PROBLEM of German re-education should not be narrowly tied up with schools and classroom teaching, of course. It is much broader than that. We are educated not only by teachers, but by what we do, by the purposes we can develop and help to carry through, particularly if we feel that in doing so we can be useful to our society.

The social and cultural conditions of the past decades have constantly lengthened the school age and brought a larger and larger percentage of young people into schools, especially into secondary schools. This has happened for two reasons: First, mass-production industry no longer needs the hands of young people. So they attend schools because it is still the best thing they can do. Secondly, we live in a society that is both complicated and competitive. This demands from everyone, if he is to fulfill the duties of citizenship and to compete with his fellow men, a knowledge much wider than was necessary in earlier years. Comparing the present state of civilization with that of earlier times, however, we may well doubt whether all this book learning has made people more mature than did the former system of practical apprenticeship in life.

The extended schooling of more prosperous decades may no longer be possible in postwar Germany or even desirable. Most urgent is the need to build shelter for the millions of homeless people, to reconstruct towns and streets, to provide at least a minimum of food. A large group of children are in such a nervous state that it may be much better to give

them practical outlets for their tension than to keep them fidgeting on school benches. Other young people, the more resistant type, have perhaps acquired such a feeling of strength and independence from hours of danger that school will prove a rather dull affair for them. And there is a third group of roving children who, like little gypsies, may prefer anything to the restraints of school life.

### ***Is relief instead of re-education the real task?***

In view of all these facts is the whole task of German re-education a matter of answering these more practical problems rather than a matter of textbooks and classrooms? Might the influence of the Four Powers in German re-education be greater if, instead of talking about democracy and the "re-incorporation of Germany into the family of nations," they were to use the schools, the teachers, and the children as agents of relief?

There is a great difference between simply feeding starving people and helping them to reorganize their scattered society. Just dumping the food that is gathered and giving orders that have to be obeyed tends to demoralize the receivers while they have to accept the charity and the commands. On the other hand, having them participate actively in a great human enterprise encourages the receivers to take interest in their own recovery.

Many school buildings have been put to use as hospitals or clinics of one kind or another. Should the school also become a kind of community center in which teaching and learning go hand in hand with the community's efforts at relief and reconstruction? Practical and purposeful "education" along such lines might also stimulate completely new forms of international cooperation among young people. After the first waves of hatred are gone, the type of youth who at the beginning of this century was the leader in various youth movements may begin to think of establishing contact with





**Some German industry may be rebuilt and allowed to produce for peace.**

the youth of the former enemy. If they come together with no other purpose than to discuss the origin of wars and "international problems," they are likely to be disappointed. But if they have an opportunity to join the youth of another country in constructive social and educational effort, they may some day be able to discuss the origins of war and "international problems," and not be disappointed.

All these considerations suggest that formal education should be geared as much as possible into the general purpose and activity of reconstruction. We have to change our customary idea of schooling as a classroom procedure and understand that for large parts of the youth of Germany a useful and well-directed practical life may be the best way out of distress and isolation.

### ***The arts***

The restoration of a sound emotional life will be one of the



main tasks of German re-education. Tyranny from within and defeat from outside, dreams of power whipped up by propaganda and initial success and then suddenly broken, sleepless nights and restless days, all these produce sick souls. And sick souls cannot be cured by more and more stimulation; they need first of all rest and stable surroundings.

In the pre-1914 days the Germans cultivated the arts with great enthusiasm. Almost every town with more than 30,000 inhabitants possessed a permanent, state or city, theater with a rich repertoire. The actors were not dependent on the financial success of a play and gave both popular and classical drama. Shakespeare, Schiller, and Goethe were always represented. Cities with a population of over 100,000, and even smaller places which up to 1918 had harbored a princely court, had opera companies.

The first World War and the depression made it difficult to maintain these centers; yet many cities held onto them. The second World War has certainly ended them all. But wherever the desire for amateur theatricals emerges, it ought to be encouraged, provided the scene is not used for the glorification of military ambitions.

The Germans also went in strongly for music. The large majority of the elementary-school teachers, especially those trained in the older teachers colleges, had to play an instrument and give music lessons to their pupils. Every school had its choir, often connected with the local church. Some secondary schools, especially the Thomas Schule at Leipzig, where Bach had been the cantor, and the Kreuz Schule at Dresden, had choirs famous throughout the musical world.

Singing clubs could be found in every town and in the larger villages. They did not always keep high musical standards, and sometimes the weekly singing sessions were the excuse for—or at least the overture to—an evening of drinking. But they served as an emotional outlet, and like many American clubs they brought people together who other-

wise would not have met. It might be one of the first tasks of re-education to see to it that these opportunities for a sound social life are restored.

## ***CAN ADULT GERMANS BE RE-EDUCATED?***

WHEN THE GERMAN ARMY was dissolved in 1918 and the soldiers and their officers had to take up civil occupations, a large group were unable to adjust themselves to normal life. They joined the secret military societies whose members assassinated such leaders of the leftist and liberal parties as Walter Rathenau, minister of foreign affairs, and one of the most constructive of modern thinkers and statesmen. When the National Socialist Party rose to power these men were Hitler's vanguard. They trained his brown shirts and black shirts. They used their previous military training for the elimination of opposing groups and for the total control of Germany. They also formed the link between the Nazis and the professional army.

Now, after twelve years of Hitlerism—six of those years in military service for many of the German veterans—the difficulty of readjustment will be still greater. The main problem will be to give the men work and food. Of work there will probably be enough, provided there is sufficient raw material and some kind of inner peace. For, unless a gigantic rebuilding program is started, about one-third of the German population will be forced to live in shanties and to get their food from public kitchens.

But as man does not live on bread alone, so he does not live on work alone. If he is a German he will want to have some explanation for the defeats he has gone through. Like other men he needs some understanding of the conditions which make him happy and unhappy, and he also needs something to lift himself above the daily routine.

### ***The same but different***

Most methods for satisfying these needs in adults will be similar to those used in the re-education of youth: pamphlets for general enlightenment, radio, movies, television, athletic sports, and as much active participation in the arts as possible. Generally speaking, active participation instead of passive acceptance will be the deciding factor in the success of adult re-education.

Fortunately there will still be people who took part in the adult education movement of the democratic era. The tendency of this movement was to replace the old lecture method by roundtable discussions and by seminars which required thorough and constant cooperation on the part of the learner. Many of the students were the best type of German worker; there are signs that despite all Nazi pressure they have not forgotten their traditions.

There were also *Volkshochschulheime* (literally "folk high school homes") on the Danish and Swedish pattern. These were schools situated in the country where adult students lived for a period of three to six months. Most of these schools were strongly democratic in character. Whether they can be revived in some modified form will depend on the general development of Germany. But sometimes the will toward a better education develops most strongly under the worst conditions.

The trade unions destroyed by the Hitler system showed from their very beginning an intense interest in the intellectual improvement of the working class. The most important of these associations were the socialist and the Christian, especially the Catholic trade unions. The socialist trade unions derived their views about society mainly from the teachings of Karl Marx, though, in contrast to the communists, in a very moderate and essentially democratic form. The Christian trade unions emphasized the principles of Christianity as the best means to overcome the conflict of classes and to fight

the evils of industrial exploitation and competition. If the trade unions are revived in one or the other form they will presumably take up their educational tradition again.

### ***What role will the churches play?***

Both Catholic and Protestant churches in Germany can show an honor roll with the names of many martyrs persecuted by the Nazis, though the honor roll of the leftist parties is much longer. Both churches could have fought harder than they did against Hitler's nationalist and imperialist tendencies. They criticized him mainly for his religious and racial persecutions, less for his wars of conquest. Nevertheless, in hours of danger and shame they have been a source of strength for the decent German.

The churches, perhaps more than any other organization, will be able to re-establish international contacts and help with relief work. And they will be concerned with the education of their people just as much as schools, though by different means. After the surrender, the services and sermons of some of them gave the first encouraging signs of German repudiation of Nazism and its deeds.

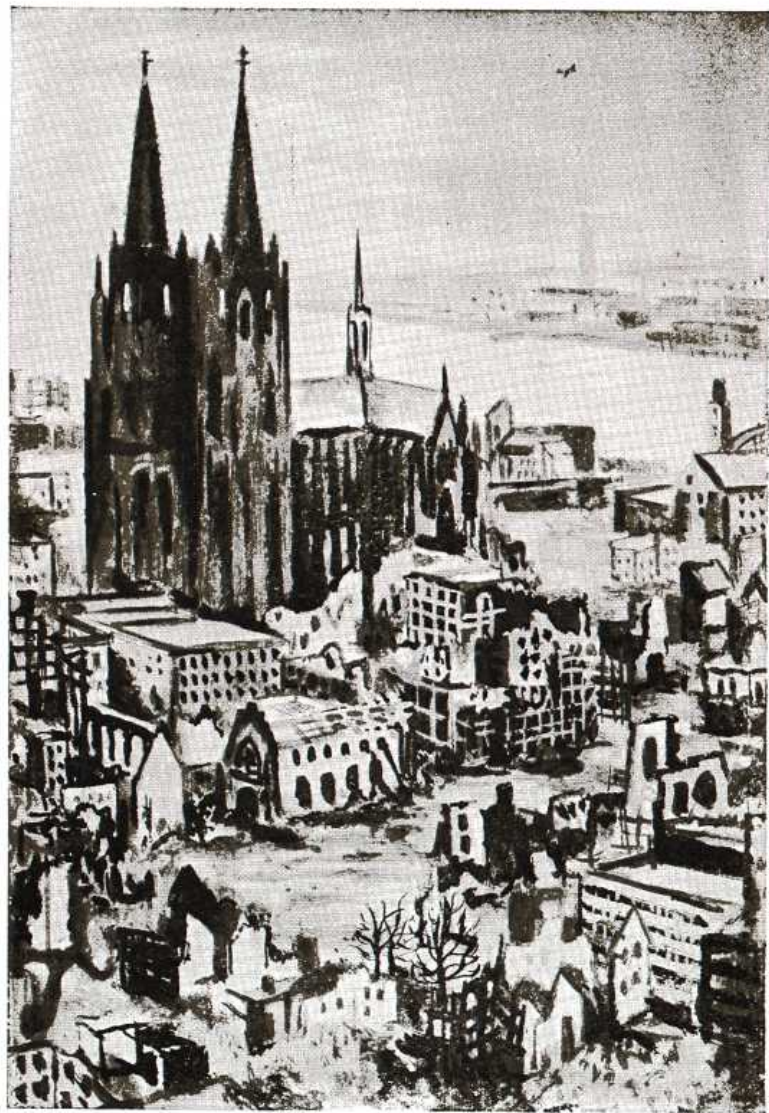
### ***Should an international office of education be created?***

In 1942 the British Council, which is the agency of the British government responsible for cultural relations with other countries, called together the ministers of education of the governments which had to take refuge in England while their own countries were occupied. The negotiations first centered around the educational problems likely to confront the occupied countries after their liberation.

The Conference of Allied Ministers of Education invited the United States government to participate in its deliberations. The invitation was accepted, and an American delegation went to London.

Several important commissions have developed out of this conference. All are concerned with the establishment of sound





cultural and educational conditions in the various war-stricken countries. There is a commission on basic school equipment, one on scientific and laboratory equipment, one on books and periodicals, one on films and visual aids, and one on the protection and restitution of cultural materials.

Also, in connection with the work of the conference, a plan long cherished by American and other democratic educators may materialize. This is the establishment of a permanent international office for educational and cultural relations.

It is said that such an office could serve as a center for the study of international cultural relations, advise governments on the organization of schools and the methods of teaching in other countries, promote the exchange of students, teachers, publications, and cultural materials.

Such an office could also be of great help in building bridges between the United Nations and their former enemies. But like all education, it could succeed only if the attitude and cultural atmosphere in the participating nations themselves are favorable to international cooperation. All education is an equilibrium between influence from outside and response from within. An international office of education might spread the most admirable suggestions about international cooperation, but if there were no response from within the individual nations, its labor would be in vain.

### ***CAN CONDITIONS FOR RE-EDUCATION BE ESTABLISHED?***

ALL EFFORTS to re-educate the Germans will fall on barren ground unless they call forth response from within the Germans themselves. A realization of this truth and of its implications in practice is the first step to sensible talk about education and re-education. That is why so much attention has been paid to it here.

The question whether the Germans can be re-educated can be answered only by concrete action and by the creation in

postwar Germany of the actual conditions in which education is possible. These conditions are easy to describe but hard to accomplish after a war. Basically they involve opportunity for survival, adequate work, and hope for the future. In today's interdependent world, this requires the cooperation of all nations.

But German re-education requires first of all the cooperation of the Germans themselves. Somewhere deep within themselves the Germans must have a desire to work toward their own salvation, a wish to disinfect themselves of the virus of Nazism. If they do not, then all we build or propose to build, any program we follow, is without foundation.

In such an event we will find ourselves in a vicious circle of perpetual force. To this we certainly do not want to contribute. But neither must we flinch from giving the war criminals their just due. "To re-establish justice we must mete out justice."

If at times it seems that the Nazis have left no foundations on which to build a decent, self-respecting Germany, we may in these words of a hard-boiled American journalist still find hope that the foundations are there. In Berlin in 1941 William Russell wrote:

"If the United States goes into this war there is one thing I do not want to forget. There are millions of people in Germany who do not agree with the policies of their leaders. And there are other millions, simple people, who believe exactly what their leaders tell them—especially when they tell them the same thing day after day. I do not want to be blind with hatred and forget you cannot punish a whole nation as you might punish a single criminal. That was tried once and failed miserably. When it is over try to help them to recover from what they have suffered. Try to remove the causes for the rise of such people as Adolf Hitler. There should be enough intelligence kicking around in the world to accomplish that."



## TO THE DISCUSSION LEADER

THIS PAMPHLET raises one of the biggest questions facing the postwar world: *Can the Germans be re-educated?* No one can give a positive answer now. The Germans must answer it themselves by their actions, their motives, and the trend of their efforts. This question gives rise to two others: If the Germans *can* be re-educated, will this brighten the hope of peace in Europe? If they *can't*, will the Four Powers face the problem of maintaining law and order permanently in Germany?

Germany has been our enemy in two wars in one generation. We have seen Germans ruthlessly inflict a propaganda of lies and mental poison on the rest of the world in an effort to camouflage Germany's real motives. We have seen the Nazi regime pervert education, regiment science, and turn the industrial might of a great nation toward the destruction of other nations in an effort to dominate the world.

We have seen that effort smashed by the cooperative might of nations determined that no gangster nation shall dominate the world.

The war has ended in Europe. The German people remain. They are the people who tolerated the Nazi regime; they are the people whose minds were poisoned by the propaganda of their own making; they are the people who deified the totalitarian state above all else. They are also a people whose traditions were respected before the two world wars—traditions of great writers, musicians, scientists, educators, inventors, philosophers.

Can these people rebuild their culture along constructive lines? Can they again contribute to the betterment of civilization instead of plot its destruction? In short, *can* they be re-educated?



### ***How do you get people interested?***

Interest in exchanging ideas about important subjects is the spark that starts off discussion groups. It is also the stimulus that keeps them going. Interest grows out of the desire of individuals to obtain more information, to learn what the other fellow thinks, and to express personal views.

People throughout the United Nations are asking themselves today the question: *Can* the Germans be re-educated? Discussion leaders have a subject, therefore, in which nearly all people are interested. The problem is how to make maximum use of that interest in discussing this important subject.

When the time and place of the discussion meeting has been decided, discussion leaders should publicize the event so that interested persons can make plans to attend. The editor of the local newspaper will probably consider the meeting worth a story. Announcements can be made on bulletin boards. Posters can be prepared and arranged in such appropriate places as libraries, service clubs, recreation rooms, and near mess halls. Perhaps the meeting can be announced over a public address system.

Discussion leaders will usually find it helpful to invite the cooperation of local librarians. Perhaps a reading table can be reserved for copies of this pamphlet and other pamphlets and books on the subject of re-educating the Germans. Copies of this pamphlet may be placed in other types of reading rooms and recreation centers. Persons will be more interested in attending a discussion meeting if they have an opportunity to "read up" on the subject *before* the meeting. They will also be better prepared to take an active part in the discussion. Their opinions will be more valuable and they will be better able to evaluate other opinions.

### ***What type of discussion is best?***

Lively discussion can be held between two people or before a group of several hundred. The size of the group is an

important factor in deciding what type of discussion is best. Other factors are the kind of facilities offered in the meeting place and the nature of the subject itself.

Group discussions usually are forums, panels, symposiums, or informal group discussions. Any one of these might be used in discussing the re-education of the Germans. Here are some suggestions.

*Forum:* The value of a forum depends in large measure on the speaker. If you can obtain a speaker who is well informed on the nature of the Germans, their backgrounds, their basic ideas, and the educational practices under the Nazi regime, you will probably find the forum a successful type of discussion. Remember that one of the most valuable and interesting parts of the forum program is the question period following the speaker's address. This enables members of your group to ask their own questions.

*Panel:* You could plan an interesting discussion on re-educating the Germans by carefully selecting a panel of four to eight qualified participants. Some might be American troops who fought the Germans in World War II. One might be a native of one of Germany's neighbor nations. You could have all members of your panel read this pamphlet and other material on the subject before the meeting. A panel discussion can be of great value. It gives the impact of several personalities and enables members of the group to question any or all the panel participants.

*Symposium:* The contents of this pamphlet suggests various major phases of the subject that could be covered by symposium speakers. Each would speak for five or ten minutes. Then you could invite members of your group to question the speakers, and the remainder of the meeting could continue as a general informal discussion.

*Informal Discussion:* Most Americans have followed events of the war closely and have read a great deal about the Germans. Nearly all individuals, therefore, have their own

ideas about re-educating the Germans. You could probably have an interesting and successful meeting by devoting the entire time to informal discussion. This will require careful preparation on your part. An outline of your program and a list of key questions that will bring major issues up for discussion will help make the meeting lively and worth while. In this type of discussion it is important that you, the leader, maintain an open-minded attitude and encourage frank statements of various points of view. You should avoid trying to mold a group "conclusion." One important value of discussing a subject like re-educating the Germans is to examine it from all possible points of view and then let each individual think the problem through for himself.

### ***Can the discussion leader get other aids?***

Numerous helpful suggestions for discussion leaders can be found in EM 1, GI Roundtable: *Guide for Discussion Leaders*. Every discussion leader will do well to read this *Guide*. It will explain in detail why it is important for leaders to plan and outline their programs carefully. It will give many suggestions on organizing discussion groups, conducting discussions, and handling difficult personalities.

EM 90, *GI Radio Roundtable*, contains numerous suggestions and much sound advice for persons faced with the problem of preparing and conducting programs to be broadcast on radios or over loud-speaker systems of the Armed Forces Radio Service.

### ***Questions for discussion***

Intelligent discussion of any subject requires thought-evoking questions. Readers of this pamphlet will benefit if they raise their own questions as they read. Discussion leaders should jot down questions as they plan and prepare their program. Leaders should encourage members of discussion groups to ask questions. Listed below are some questions which readers and discussion leaders alike may find helpful:

## 1

Will Germany's past exert a major or minor influence on its future? Can a people develop if only one group, either alien or domestic, decides the needs and then the laws for the whole group? Do you think the German people might profit from town meetings, assemblies, and discussion meetings with occupation officials or representatives from the occupation troops?

## 2

Can the hard and ruthless qualities of the German character be changed? Are these qualities the result of heredity or environment? Do you think the personal conduct of American occupation soldiers will have much influence on the task of German re-education?

## 3

Can German schools exert a decisive influence in the future on the thinking and feeling of the people? Do you think that alien teachers should conduct German schools, or should all the teachers be Germans? Why? Would some kind of student self-government responsible to occupying authorities improve the German educational system?

## 4

Would you favor the invitation of German scholars to international scientific and cultural conferences? Why? Is there an antidote for the poisonous propaganda upon which Germans have been educated for more than a decade under the Nazis?

## 5

Do you think the Germans are capable of responsible representative self-government? Do you think the average German's apparent lack of interest in domestic politics has been due to personal choice or to lack of opportunity? Does Germany have political traditions upon which the people can build a stable, responsible government that is friendly and cooperative toward other nations?



## FOR FURTHER READING

THESE BOOKS are suggested for supplementary reading if you have access to them or wish to purchase them from the publishers. They are not necessarily approved nor officially supplied by the War Department. They have been selected because they give additional information and represent different points of view.

EDUCATION AND THE PEOPLE'S PEACE. By the Educational Policies Commission. Published by National Education Association of the United States, 1201 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D. C. (1943). 10 cents.

EDUCATION AND THE UNITED NATIONS. Report of a Joint Commission of the Council for Education in World Citizenship and the London International Assembly. Published by American Council on Public Affairs, 2153 Florida Ave., Washington, D. C. (1943). \$1.00.

GERMANY. By Hiram Motherwell. No. 1 of *Reference Pamphlets*, published by Western Reserve University Press, Cleveland 6, Ohio (1944). 25 cents.

INTELLECTUAL COOPERATION: NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL. By Isaac L. Kandel. Published by Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 West 120th St., New York 27, N. Y. (1944). \$1.25.

NATIONAL STUDY CONFERENCE ON THE CHURCHES AND A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE, CLEVELAND 1945. No. 409, Section 1 of International Conciliation, published by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 405 West 117th St., New York 27, N. Y. (March 1945). 5 cents.

RE-EDUCATING GERMANY. By Werner Richter. Published by University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Ave. Chicago 37, Ill. (1945). \$3.50.

SHALL WE RULE GERMANY? By Oswald Garrison Villard. Published by Post War World Council, 112 East 19th St., New York, N. Y. (1943). 10 cents.

GERMANY—WHAT NEXT? By Henry Beckett. No. 7 of *Victory-to-Peace* pamphlets issued by Army and Navy Department of the Young Men's Christian Association, 347 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y. (1945). Free on request to servicemen.

A SHORT HISTORY OF GERMANY. By S. H. Steinberg. Published by Cambridge University Press. Distributed by Macmillan and Co., 60 Fifth Ave., New York 11, N. Y. (1945). \$3.00.

# OTHER GI ROUNDTABLE SUBJECTS

INTRODUCTORY COPIES of each new *GI Roundtable* pamphlet are automatically issued to information-education officers in the United States and oversea areas. Additional copies are authorized on the basis of one copy for each 25 military personnel. Pamphlets may be requisitioned from the United States Armed Forces Institute, Madison 3, Wisconsin, or from the nearest USAFI Oversea Branch. List EM number, title, and quantity. New subjects will be announced as published. *GI Roundtable* subjects now available:

- EM 1, GUIDE FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS
- EM 2, WHAT IS PROPAGANDA?
- EM 10, WHAT SHALL BE DONE ABOUT GERMANY AFTER THE WAR?
- EM 11, WHAT SHALL BE DONE WITH THE WAR CRIMINALS?
- EM 12, CAN WE PREVENT FUTURE WARS?
- EM 13, HOW SHALL LEND-LEASE ACCOUNTS BE SETTLED?
- EM 14, IS THE GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY A SUCCESS?
- EM 15, WHAT SHALL BE DONE ABOUT JAPAN AFTER VICTORY?
- EM 20, WHAT HAS ALASKA TO OFFER POSTWAR PIONEERS?
- EM 22, WILL THERE BE WORK FOR ALL?
- EM 23, WHY CO-OPS? WHAT ARE THEY? HOW DO THEY WORK?
- EM 24, WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR THE PHILIPPINES?
- EM 27, WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION?
- EM 30, CAN WAR MARRIAGES BE MADE TO WORK?\*
- EM 31, DO YOU WANT YOUR WIFE TO WORK AFTER THE WAR?
- EM 32, SHALL I BUILD A HOUSE AFTER THE WAR?
- EM 33, WHAT WILL YOUR TOWN BE LIKE?
- EM 34, SHALL I GO BACK TO SCHOOL?
- EM 35, SHALL I TAKE UP FARMING?
- EM 36, DOES IT PAY TO BORROW?
- EM 37, WILL THERE BE A PLANE IN EVERY GARAGE?
- EM 40, WILL THE FRENCH REPUBLIC LIVE AGAIN?
- EM 41, OUR BRITISH ALLY
- EM 42, OUR CHINESE ALLY
- EM 43, THE BALKANS—MANY PEOPLES, MANY PROBLEMS
- EM 44, AUSTRALIA: OUR NEIGHBOR "DOWN UNDER"
- EM 45, WHAT FUTURE FOR THE ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC?
- EM 46, OUR RUSSIAN ALLY
- EM 90, GI RADIO ROUNDTABLE

\*For distribution in the United States only.

